

• Preparing for College Courses in Music •

Think you might want to be a music major?

Majoring in music takes a lot of hard work and long hours. However, if you're dedicated, you will find it very rewarding. Majoring in music means not only performing, but also taking academic classes in music. These classes cover music history, music theory (the mechanics of how music works), and ear training. In addition to your instrument or voice, you will have to study piano.

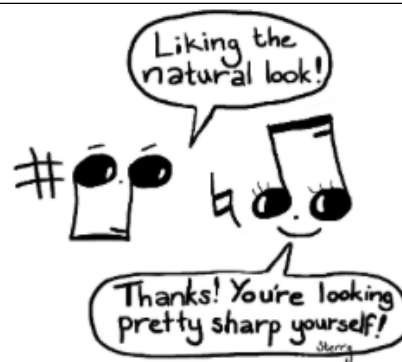
In order to do your best in these classes, you will need to do some PREPARATION before your freshman year. This may mean taking the INITIATIVE in teaching yourself subjects that are not offered at your high school. This handout will help you get started with studies in:

- music fundamentals
- ear training
- piano
- music literature

Music as a minor

b ♯ #

Not interested in music as a major, but still want to remain active in music while you're in college? Consider the music minor. You'll take freshman-level academic music courses and several years of lessons and ensembles. Keep in mind that your PREPARATION needs to be the same as that of a music major.



*Some of these resources may cost you money. This should not be a deterrent. Think of this as an INVESTMENT in your future. After all, which is most expensive: an app, a software program, an online course OR an extra semester of college tuition?

If you're considering being a music major or minor in college, read this to understand expectations of you:

<https://trumpetpedagogy.wordpress.com> →

FOR STUDENTS → RECENT POSTS → "Getting to the Next Level"

How should you prepare to be a music major or minor?

<http://pitchperfectmusic.org/articles/prepare-majoring-music-college/>

Wondering what you can do with a music degree?

<http://majoringinmusic.com/what-can-you-do-with-a-music-degree/>

Most college music programs require students to take a PLACEMENT TEST before fall semester classes begin. The purpose of the test is to determine if you are *ready* for college level music classes. If your score is low, you may be required to take a remedial music fundamentals class. Taking the remedial class may delay graduation for a year, costing you time and money that you could have saved if you were better prepared. View sample questions and an online practice placement exam at <http://www.fredonia.edu/music/theory/theoryplacement.asp>



MUSIC FUNDAMENTALS

(Music Fundamentals is the introduction to Music Theory and Harmony.)

In order to understand the way music works, you must speak the language. There is so much to learn over the course of four years that it is necessary you arrive at college with a good grasp of the language of music. The most basic ways we think about music are known as "music fundamentals." Without being fluent in this language, you won't get very far in the field of music.

STOP!!

You're under
a rest!!



When you get to college, your professors will expect that you can:

- read pitches in both treble and bass clefs
- name and read all rhythmic values
- write and read time signatures (both simple and compound meters)
- spell and identify major scales and all 3 forms of minor scales
- write, read, and identify major and minor key signatures
- identify and spell intervals
- identify and use basic chords (I, IV, and V triads)

Make sure that you can go straight into the first class of the 4-semester undergraduate music theory sequence instead of having to take a remedial music fundamentals class. Sadly, many students who are assigned to a fundamentals class do not go on to complete their music degree.

*It is **HIGHLY** recommended that you take a music theory class in high school if one is offered. Some high schools even offer AP music theory classes.**

A WISE INVESTMENT

The Eastman School of Music offers a thorough 4-week online course for music fundamentals. It covers *all* important topics to prepare students for placement exams and entrance into freshman courses. The cost is \$97, significantly less expensive than an extra semester of college tuition! Go to:

<http://www.esm.rochester.edu/iml/store/product/music-theory-fundamentals/>

*Keep in mind that many college music programs do not automatically accept AP credit to exempt students from college classes, but rather test the student's knowledge through the college's own placement exam.



Still struggling with reading music? Watch a cartoon:

<http://ed.ted.com/lessons/how-to-read-music-tim-hansen-watch>

If you're looking for less expensive options for studying music fundamentals:

MFun

is a program that covers all the topics you'll need and provides interactive drills and quizzes and written quizzes. Cost is \$40 for a download or CD. Find details at:

<http://macgamut.com/products/mfun>

Music Theory Skill Builder

is designed to be used in a college class, but you can use it for self-study. Go to <http://register.mtsb.oup.com>, click on "Music Theory Skill Builder," then "Self Study Course." Cost is \$34.95.

TWO GREAT WEBSITES

Though the following websites are not as thorough and focused as the Eastman course (eTheory), MFun and "Skill Builder," they are good, free places to start:

1

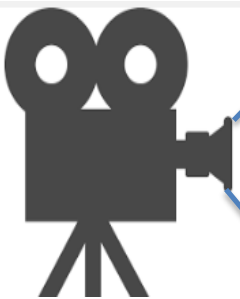
musictheory.net Topics are explained through bulleted facts with illustrations. Exercises help you master each. This website has a related app (\$2.99) for apple products called "Theory Lessons."

2

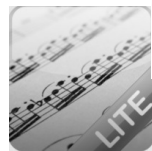
teoria.com Easy to read tutorials with animation and sound make lessons fun. Access to the website is free, but you can purchase an annual membership for \$20. Exercises are mobile app compatible. Link to google+ from teoria.com for cool facts and videos.

Online lectures and videos

Music Theory Videos presents....lectures to help students prepare for the Royal Schools of Music exams. Enjoy hearing the Queen's English, but you won't find much in the way of drills and quizzes. <http://www.musictheoryvideos.com/>
And for our double feature...go to "One Minute Music Lessons" for step-by-step instruction. Although you won't find quizzes, you can download podcasts of lectures. <http://oneminutemusiclesson.com/lessons/>
Encore: for quick lessons with animation, go to <http://www.8notes.com/theory/>



FUN & GAMES at **Music Theory Pro**. This apple product offers a game format for drilling note names, key signatures and ear training (intervals). All for \$3.99.



FLASHCARDS

ARE FUN! FIND ONLINE FLASHCARDS FOR PITCH NAMES, PIANO KEY NAMES, KEY SIGNATURES, INTERVALS, AND TRIADS AT [HTTP://WWW.MUSICCARDS.NET/](http://www.musiccards.net/)

Music Theory Lessons LITE is a free app for Android. Topics include music fundamentals up to intervals (no chords).

Using **Wolfram Music Theory Course Assistant**, you can create chord progressions and learn about interval inversion. Apple. \$1.99



Ear training is about connecting sound with written pitches and rhythms. There are two main components of ear training:

1. being able to look at a passage of music and know exactly how it sounds without playing it on an instrument.

2. being able to write down music that you hear without the help of an instrument.

EAR TRAINING



As a professional musician, you will use ear training skills every day of your working life.

Ear training is actually *brain* training—training to connect sight and sound.

When you arrive at college, you should be able to:

- write out simple melodies in musical notation (such as “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”)
- find the beat when listening to a musical passage
- determine whether a passage you hear has 2, 3, or 4 beats per measure
- conduct in 2, 3, 4
- hear whether a passage is in simple meter or compound meter

There are dozens of websites, apps, and programs available. You might want to start with these:



Ear Trainer Lite—A free app for iPhone and iPad. You’ll find a limited number of exercises in aural recognition of intervals, chords, progressions, scale, and melodies. If you like it, move on to “Ear Trainer” for \$6.99 with more extensive exercises.



MyEarTrainer—Free for Android, iPhone & iPad. Learn to identify intervals, chords, scales, random melodies, and chord progressions. Create custom exercises.



Ear Worthy—A \$.99 app for Apple and Android. Aurally identify intervals, scales, and chords.



The Musical Intervals Tutor

gives you online practice hearing and identifying intervals.

<http://www.madelinesalocks.com/MusicalIntervalsTutor/>

Some resources promise to teach you perfect pitch. This is not a necessary skill for a professional musician. Rather than being able to identify individual pitches, you should focus on hearing the distance between 2 pitches (intervals) and hearing pitches as scale degrees within a key.

Even if you are not primarily a vocalist, **SINGING** is an essential part of being a professional musician. WHY? Because singing is COMMUNICATION for musicians. You will find yourself frequently singing to colleagues and students as a way to convey ideas that cannot be communicated in words.

Singing is also important in ear training class because your professor is not a mind reader and can't hear what's in your head. You'll need to sing for them so they can check your internal hearing and make sure you know exactly how a passage of music sounds.

Singing is an important educational tool. You do NOT need a pretty solo voice. Any vocal timbre will do (including "croaking frog") as long as you can sing pitches and rhythms accurately.



ESSENTIAL skills for college:

1. match exact pitch
2. match pitch at the octave (sing a note pitched outside your range an octave lower or higher in your range)
3. hear a passage and sing the tonic scale degree
4. sing major and minor scales
5. sing rhythmic patterns using beats and divisions in simple and compound meters
6. sing intervals

Listen to "Twinkle Twinkle" sung on solfège, then sing along: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ziSaXP-Rvtg>

THE FIRST STEP: matching pitch

Check your ability to match pitch at:

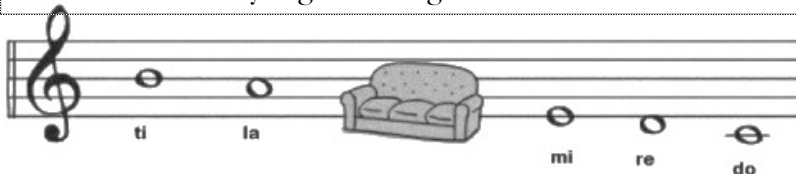
<http://trainer.thetamusic.com/en/content/vocal-match>

In ear training classes, pitches are sung on numbers or special syllables known as **SOLFÈGE** rather than

letter names. Ever notice how major scales all sound the same no matter what key you're in? This is because although the notes are not the same, the FUNCTION of each note of the scale is the same no matter the key.

More about this at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OdtGJkq-O8A>

Learning SOLFÈGE can be like learning a foreign language. One of the biggest struggles for freshmen music majors is learning solfège their first semester. Imagine how less stressful ear training will be for you if you learn SOLFÈGE **before** you get to college!



While you're SINGING and LISTENING to music:

- find the beat
- determine whether the beat divides into groups of 2s or 3s
- conduct along with the music
- harmonize with the music
- try writing down melodies that you hear

SINGING takes a special set of muscles. If it's something you've never done, take some time to become physically comfortable with singing:

- join a school, church, or community choir
- sing with the radio and mp3s
- sing in the shower!

Learn basic conducting patterns at:

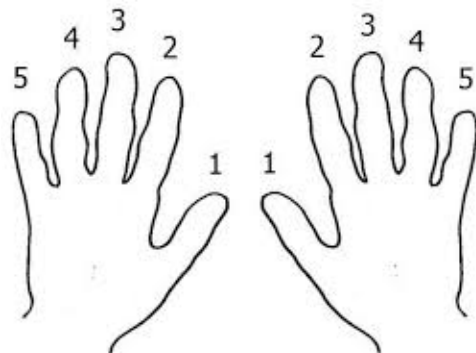
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DdvHUJ88tao&index=2&list=PLUSbgFFT5WwKYNIWLdqwU4JxMjldFwkDm>

The ultimate SOLFÈGE song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLm07s8fnzM>



VOCALISTS and DRUMMERS sometime struggle with reading pitch notation. This may be because they lack a visual metaphor for pitch placement. Keyboard skills help with this challenge.

PIANO



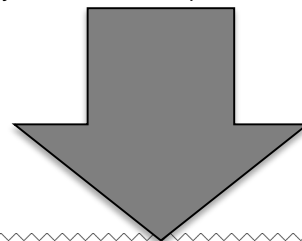
In college, music majors are required to take 4 semesters of piano. These piano courses are usually set up as “class piano” in a piano lab with a dozen or so students. If you have had previous experience with piano, you may test out of one or more semesters. In fact, you will *want* to do this since the first two semesters are considered remedial courses and may not count toward your music degree.

Why study piano if it's not your instrument?

1. The layout of the keyboard gives you a solid, logical visual image of pitch. This is helpful when you're trying to visualize scales, key relationships, intervals, chords, and scale degrees.
2. Playing chords on piano is an important way to learn about harmonic progressions. This is especially helpful for musicians who only play or sing one note at a time.
3. Reading keyboard scores is a gateway into reading choral, band and orchestral scores.
4. Being able to play basic accompaniments is extremely important in teaching music at all levels—both privately and in the classroom. It is also necessary for church musicians, conductors, and composers.

Although you can start college with no piano experience, you will be much more successful during your college career if you have the following skills when you arrive:

1. be familiar with placement of pitches on the keyboard—be able to match a key to its notated pitch in BOTH treble and bass clefs.
2. be able to play rhythms accurately
2. be able to play chords, scales, arpeggios, and cadences
3. be able to play simple pieces with both hands



THE ULTIMATE RESOURCE

Nothing will do you as much good as private piano lessons with a well trained piano teacher. It's been proven that the *earlier* you start, the better. Look for a teacher who is MTNA certified:

<http://www.mtnacertification.org>

- Can't afford private lessons? It might be worthwhile to try the old fashion practice of bartering. •

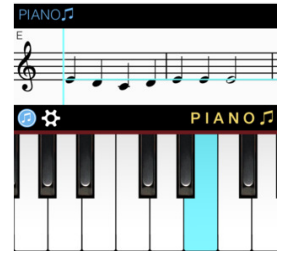


• **Do yourself a favor and get to know the keyboard before you get to college!** •



Keep a piano in your pocket with the app **Virtuoso Piano Free 3**. This portable keyboard is free for Apple devices. Keys are labeled for easy ID.

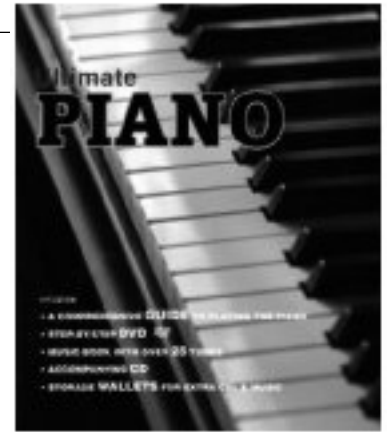
The app **Piano** actually shows you how to play simple songs by coordinating music notation and illuminated piano keys. Free for Apple users.



Try *Piano Tutorial* for Android devices for a free introduction to the piano. Learn simple tunes too!

100% of music students who didn't take piano lessons before college wish they had!

In addition to handy apps, you can find books, some with CDs, on learning the piano for those with zero experience. Look for books like Nick Freeth's *Ultimate Piano*. You can find these in bargain bins at book stores and online sources for cheap prices. These books cover keyboard layout, note names, scales, and chords.



is a fun website that consists of a series of short videos designed to teach beginner through advanced students. It's free too! Although it's no substitute for working with a live teacher (you won't get valuable feedback), it is unique in that you can simultaneously watch

the teacher *and* his hands on the keyboard. Register on the website for more thorough instruction. The online lessons include some fundamentals and ear training at the piano.

START COLLEGE WITH A BANG!

Interested in passing out of remedial Class Piano 1 and 2? Know these skills:

- all major scales
- all harmonic minor scales
- all major and minor chord arpeggios
- all major and minor chords and inversions
- the V7 chord and its inversions
- harmonizations with I, ii, IV, V7, and vi chords
- beginning classical pieces like those found in

Masterworks Classics, Levels 1-2



1. Hildegard: "O successores" • 2. Palestrina: "Tu es Petrus" • 3. Vivaldi: *The Four Seasons*

MUSIC HISTORY and LITERATURE



Curriculum for a music degree involves studying, singing, playing and listening to "classical" music primarily—not pop, not country, not top 40, not blues, not rap, not gospel, not techno, etc.

There is an amazing amount of diverse styles in what we call "classical" music.

YOU NEED A GENERAL IDEA OF DIFFERENT STYLES, GENRES, HISTORICAL PERIODS, AND COMPOSERS.

Don't know where to start?



1. search for "myhistoryofmusic" on [youtube](#) for an audio tour of classical music from the Greeks to the 21st century.
2. Check out the page borders on this page and the next for a starting list of 25 classical works to know.
3. Download the Classical Music I: Master's Collection (free for iPhone and iPad users)

TOP RESOURCE
(and free!)

Arkansas radio waves are home to several public radio stations that broadcast hours of classical music. Make it a habit to tune in to your regional station as much as possible. Most offer live streaming and podcasts of their shows. In addition to classical, you'll find great jazz music.

Check schedules on their websites for great shows like "Performance Today," "Classical Guitar Alive," "With Heart and Voice," "From the Top," "Sunday Baroque," "Millennium of Music," "Pipedreams," "Harmonica," "Wind

and Rhythm," along with broadcasts of the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera, and regional and major symphony orchestra concerts.

GET OUT THERE!

Go to live performances of our great performing groups around the state: Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, Conway Symphony Orchestra, Symphony of Northwest Arkansas, South Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, Little Rock Wind Symphony, Arkansas Chamber Singers, Memphis Symphony Orchestra, Delta Symphony Orchestra among others.

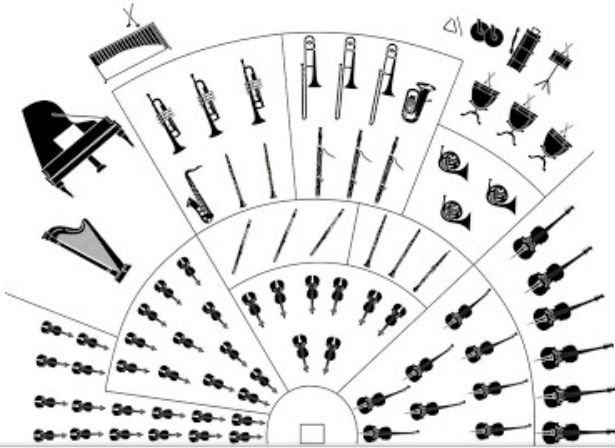
8. Beethoven: String Quartet in Bb Major, op. 130 • 9. Beethoven: Symphony no. 5 in C Minor

• 10. Beethoven: Symphony no. 9 in D Minor • 11. Berlioz: *Symphonie Fantastique* • 12. Chopin: Polonaise no. 6 in Ab Major, Op. 53

4. Bach: *Well-Tempered Clavier* • 5. Handel: *Messiah* • 6. Mozart: *The Magic Flute* • 7. Mozart: Piano Sonata in Bb Major, K. 333

21. Debussy: *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* • 22. Bartok: *Concerto for Orchestra* • 23. Copland: *Appalachian Spring*
 24. Messiaen: *Quartet for the End of Time* • 25. Stravinsky: *Rite of Spring*

- 13. Grieg: Grieg: Piano Concerto in A Minor • 14. Mahler: Symphony no. 2 in C Minor, "Ressurrection"



AS A MUSIC MAJOR YOU WILL NEED TO KNOW ALL THE INSTRUMENTS OF THE ORCHESTRA. YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO RECOGNIZE THEM BY SIGHT AND SOUND.

Be able to identify individual instruments when they are playing alone or in an ensemble.



a great place to start!

<http://www.philharmonia.co.uk>

This website is a very rich resource for information about the orchestra. It features Finnish conductor (and composer) Esa-Pekka Salonen conducting the world-renowned Philharmonia (London) in performances of extended excerpts from 8 works representing three centuries of symphonic music. Get to know the conductor and all the members of the orchestra by reading their biographies. Follow links to learn about the history of the orchestra, to see behind the scenes footage, and to watch listening guides to famous works. One of the best features of the website is the "Instruments" link (under "Explore") that takes you to videos of each instrument of the orchestra. You'll hear a musician describe how the instrument works and elements of technique. Each performer plays a short clip so you can hear the instrument in action and study its timbre. There's much more, including "The Orchestra" app for Apple (\$13.99). "The app allows real-time selection of multiple video and audio tracks, along with an automatically synchronized score and dynamic graphical note-by-note visualization of each piece as it is played. The result is an immersive environment for exploring the music and all the instruments of the orchestra."
https://www.philharmonia.co.uk/shop/118/the_orchestra_app_-_the_music

- Check out books and explore websites that feature famous composers and musical style periods.
- Create your own classical music channels on Pandora and Spotify



It is important not only to listen to good music, but to follow along with the score.
 Go to imslp.org for free copies of classical scores.

15. Mendelssohn: Symphony no. 4 in A Major, "Italian" • 16. Paganini: Caprice no. 24 • 17. Puccini: *Turandot* ("Nessun dorma")

18. Schubert: "Erlkönig" • 19. Schumann: *Dichterliebe* ("Im wunderschönen Monat Mai") • 20. Verdi: *Aida*



Think you don't like opera? There are a lot of things you might not like *just because* you don't understand them. Opera is a monumental art form and if you're avoiding opera, you're missing out on some of the most moving musical experiences in the world.

The Metropolitan Opera

is one of our national treasures. Check out their website at <http://www.metopera.org>. You can watch excerpts from operas with the world's greatest singers. Search for links to the Met app (Apple).

One of the great things about The Met is their "Live in HD" series where you can watch Metropolitan Opera live performances in movie theatres in Little Rock, Benton, Texarkana, Fayetteville, and Memphis! There is an admission fee, but it's much cheaper than a trip to New York City.

Did you know? You can find opera performances on Netflix. There are a limited number available for streaming, but many more if you have a DVD subscription.

- Suggested operas for beginners: La Boheme (the basis for the musical "Rent"), Madame Butterfly, Turandot, Carmen, Die Fledermaus, Aida •

Not sure where to start learning about opera? <https://www.laopera.org/tickets/Newcomer/What-is-Opera/>

For an "all in one" resource, check out:



The Method Behind The Music

<http://method-behind-the-music.com/>

Here you'll find:

- a music dictionary
- information about how instruments work
- fundamentals tutorials
- a component on music history
- conducting information
- an online piano you can play



Make your own study tools (including flashcards) at <https://www.studystack.com/>

Music style periods:

MEDIEVAL
600-1400

Renaissance
1400-1600

Baroque
1600-1750

Classical
1750-1825

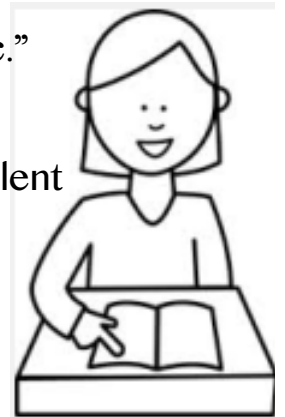
Romantic
1825-1900

MODERN
1900-PRESENT

• WHAT COLLEGE MUSIC MAJORS WANT YOU TO KNOW •



- Take as many music classes as you can in high school. In college, it's better to have “review” music classes in addition to all your core science and math than “new” music classes.
- “Learn as much as you can on your own before college.”
- “Start studying music theory ASAP.”
- “Enroll in an AP music theory class if you can.”
- If you can't get classes, FIND your own resources (library, bookstore, ask a teacher)
- “Practice [fundamentals] on your own if you have to.”
- “Ask your high school music director for private ‘lessons’ on fundamentals during lunch or after school.”
- “Study with friends” [especially if a number of you plan on majoring in music].
- “It only takes a little bit every day to become familiar with basic fundamentals.”
- “Study rhythms and be able to pick up and conduct simple music.”
- “Practice, practice, practice! Even if you can breeze through high school without practicing. Outside of high school, natural talent can only get you so far.”
- “Don't think that just because you have a nice voice that you are going to be successful as a music major.”
- “Realize you'll be naturally good at some things and you'll struggle with others. Work particularly on skills with which you struggle (sight singing, for example).”
- “It will get tough. Prepare yourself to persevere.”
- “You will need discipline to be a music major.” Start developing that now



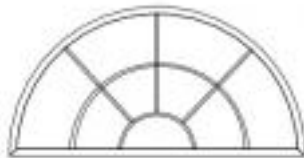
If your passion for music draws you to a career in the field, you have to think of music in terms of a relationship. When you meet someone, you want to get to know as much about them as possible—their history, places they've been, the way their mind works, what they think about, and what makes them tick. Your relationship with music should be the same. You need to be open to all aspects of music. Go out of your way to learn new facts about music, have new musical experiences, struggle to master new skills and challenges that arise. If you truly want a career in music, you cannot afford to turn your mind off to anything that music wants to teach you. Meet the challenges and you will be guaranteed a very meaningful long-term relationship.



Please copy and distribute freely.

You can find this document at:

<http://uca.edu/music/files/2011/10/Preparing-for-College-Courses-in-Music.pdf>



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Special thanks to my fall 2014 Harmony 1 classes and Christine Franklin.